



Navy says it's charting a new course after rash of problems

By DAVID SHARP
Associated Press

BATH, Maine (AP) — The Navy's speedy littoral combat ships had propulsion failures. The gun on its stealthy destroyer is a dud because of expensive ammo. Its newest aircraft carrier had problems with the system that launches aircraft. On top of that, embarrassing photos of rusty ships online have underscored delays in maintaining warships, made worse by the pandemic. The Navy's troubles have caused delays and cost billions of dollars. They come as tensions are growing in the South China Sea, Russia's navy is emboldened, Iranian speedboats are harassing vessels in the Persian Gulf.

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OLD NAVY



In this photo provided by the U.S. Navy, sailors aboard the guided missile destroyer USS Stout handle mooring lines during the ship's return to home port at Naval Station Norfolk, in Norfolk, Va., in this Oct. 12, 2020, photo

Associated Press



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Navy says it's charting a new course after rash of problems



This photo provided by Bath Iron Works shows Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday touring General Dynamics Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine, on May 10, 2021.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

"Are we ready to meet the threat from China? No," said Loren Thompson, a defense analyst at the Lexington Institute.

Adm. Mike Gilday, chief of naval operations, insists the Navy is now on a "positive trajectory" but the Navy will have to rebuild confidence under congressional scrutiny as it prepares a new strategic plan that'll include another long-term investment: unmanned vehicles. The Biden administration is readying a Navy budget proposal this week to send to lawmakers.

The Navy fleet currently falls shy of 300 ships, despite a stated goal of 355 ships. The Chinese fleet now outnumbers the U.S. Navy.

"The Chinese are closer to our goal than we are," said Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, who sits on the Appropriation Committee and wants to boost Navy spending.

Democratic Sen. Jack Reed and Republican Sen. Jim Inhofe, chairman and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, have

criticized delays and cost overruns on lead ships, and urged the Navy to ensure technology is ready before putting it aboard.

Members of Congress, who control the purse strings, say the Navy must also spend billions of dollars more in its public shipyards that maintain the ships.

"The Navy has got to get their derriere in gear," said Rep. Rob Wittman, a Republican from Virginia, who described the Navy as "at one of those crossroads."

The Navy's problem, as Thompson sees it, is that leaders rushed ambitious new ship classes to production and started construction before designs were finalized and technology fully tested.

"It tried too hard to leap ahead technologically at the beginning of the last decade," Thompson said. "As a result, every vessel that it started had severe problems."

For example, the electric-drive Zumwalt, commissioned in 2016, was designed to get close to shore to bombard land targets. But its 155mm advanced

gun system is being scrapped because each rocket-propelled, GPS-guided shell costs nearly as much as a cruise missile.

Meanwhile, two versions of the speedy littoral combat ship were envisioned as chasing down pirate ships off Somalia. One version had class-wide propulsion problems, and both were criticized as too lightly armored for open ocean combat. The Navy is already scrapping the first four of them.

The most expensive ship in Navy history, meanwhile, is the newest aircraft carrier, the USS Gerald Ford. It has had problems with the system that launches jets and the elevators that move weapons, among other things. It was supposed to cost \$10.5 billion but the price tag has risen to \$13.3 billion and "four weapons elevators are still not finished and the reliability of key systems is low," said Inhofe, a Republican from Oklahoma.

These ship classes have taught the Navy costly lessons. Costs on the first ships in the classes were 23% to

155% — or about \$5 billion — higher than original estimates, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

"Congress has mandated the Navy not put the cart before the proverbial horse by requiring system integration between platforms and new technologies and fully testing prior to rolling out new programs," said Sen. Mazie Hirono, a Hawaii Democrat and chair of the Armed Services seapower subcommittee.

Lawmakers have scrutinized the Navy's readiness and overextended crews since 17 sailors were killed in two separate collisions involving Navy destroyers in 2017. Technology failure and human error factored into both collisions.

The Navy's unceasing tempo continues to cause stress on ships and crew. Photos of the USS Stout, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, showed plentiful rust as it returned from a 210-day deployment last fall to Norfolk Naval Station in Virginia. The rust was cosmetic but underscored the toll of deferred maintenance

and long deployments on ships and sailors, who made no port calls during the pandemic.

"It's wearing out the Navy, the crews, their personnel, their families," said Matt Caris, a defense analyst at Avascent, a consulting firm in Washington, who said investments are needed in sailors, maintenance and new ships.

Maintaining the existing fleet is also going to mean upgrades to the nation's four public shipyards and hiring and training thousands of workers, said Democratic Rep. Jim Langevin of Rhode Island.

"Deferred maintenance is never a good idea," he said.

The Navy has acknowledged problems in those shipbuilding programs, while having some success in others, including submarines.

Meanwhile, the fleet is growing older — 60% of today's fleet was commissioned in 2001 or before — causing growing maintenance and operation costs at a time when the Navy wants to be spending on new ships and research. It would take 4.1% in annual funding growth to boost the fleet to 355 ships within about a decade while meeting other obligations including investments in shipyards, Gilday has said. Speaking at Navy shipbuilder Bath Iron Works on a recent afternoon, Gilday insisted things are getting better. The length of time that ships were delayed has declined by 80% at public shipyards and 60% at private yards compared to where things were 18 months ago, Gilday said.

And even those ships that suffered delays and cost overruns hold potential. The stealthy Zumwalt destroyer built at Bath Iron Works will be the first naval vessel equipped with hypersonic missiles, he said.

"I'm not saying that we're satisfied with where we are," Gilday said. "What I will say is that I think that certainly the trends are headed in the right direction." □

Florida law seeks to rein in large social media companies

By BRENDAN FARRINGTON

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) —

Standing at a lectern with a sign reading "STOP BIG TECH CENSORSHIP," Republican Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a bill on Monday that seeks to punish social media platforms that remove conservative ideas from their sites.

The new law will enable the state to fine large social media companies \$250,000 a day if they remove an account of a statewide political candidate, and \$25,000 a day if they remove an account of someone running for a local office. It takes effect July 1.

"Some of these massive, massive companies in Silicon Valley are exerting a power over our population that really has no precedent in American history," DeSantis said during a bill-signing ceremony at Florida International University in Miami. "One of their major missions seems to be suppressing ideas."

But it's questionable whether Florida will be able to enforce it. Federal law prevents internet companies from being sued for removing posts and federal law trumps state law when there is a conflict.

Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act exempts websites from being sued for removing content deemed to be "obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, ex-



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis gives his opening remarks flanked by local state delegation members prior to signing legislation that seeks to punish social media platforms that remove conservative ideas from their sites, inside Florida International University's MARC building in Miami on Monday, May 24, 2021.

Associated Press

cessively violent, harassing, or otherwise objectionable" as long as the companies are acting in "good faith." DeSantis said big tech companies are controlling accounts to remove content that doesn't suit their ideology. Republicans have accused companies like Twitter and Facebook of censoring conservative thought. DeSantis pointed in particular to then-President Donald Trump being banned by Twitter while still allowing Iranian su-

preme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to maintain an account.

"When you de-platform the president of the United States but you let Ayatollah Khamenei talk about killing Jews, that is wrong," DeSantis said to thunderous applause.

Twitter didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. Facebook declined to comment.

The law will give Florida's attorney general authority to sue companies under

the state's Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act. It will also allow individual Floridians to sue social media companies for up to \$100,000 if they feel they've been treated unfairly.

The bill targets social media platforms that have more than 100 million monthly users, which include online giants as Twitter and Facebook. But lawmakers carved out an exception for Disney and their apps by including that theme park owners wouldn't be sub-

ject to the law. The law will require large social media companies to publish standards on how it decides to "censor, deplatform, and shadow ban."

Regardless of the federal law, the new Florida law is constitutionally flawed, said Computer and Communications Industry Association President Matt Schruers.

"Gov. DeSantis says that this bill is about protecting free expression, but an internet service saying, 'We don't want to host Nazis and people encouraging self-harm' is exercising its own First Amendment rights and that is one of the critical infirmities of this bill," Schruers said.

Democrats opposed the bill and defended the right of social media companies, as private entities, to control the flow of information on their platforms. Democratic Sen. Audrey Gibson said in a press release that the bill was passed in an effort to placate Trump.

"These enterprises take responsibility for what appears on their platforms and have the right to do so," Gibson said. "Vulgarity and inciting violence are not their business model and our legislature should appreciate rather than legislate against such a concept." While similar bills have been filed in other states, DeSantis is the first governor to sign one into law. □



Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer speaks during a press event providing an update on the state's COVID-19 response at Dow Diamond on Thursday, May 20, 2021, in Midland, Mich.

Associated Press

By DAVID EGGERT

Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) —

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's administration on Monday rescinded a

Whitmer administration rescinds rule she violated at bar

rule that limits restaurant tables to no more than six people, a day after she apologized for violating the COVID-19 regulation while gathering with friends at an East Lansing bar.

The Democratic governor has said tables at the Landshark Bar & Grill were pushed together as more people arrived in her party of roughly a dozen fully vaccinated people.

A revised gatherings and face mask order, issued by the state health department, no longer includes the six-patrons-per-table

provision, effective June 1. Whitmer had announced last week the planned easing of capacity restrictions on June 1 but had not specified if other changes would be coming in the new order, which was released as expected on Monday.

The governor also signed a revised workplace safety order that immediately no longer requires 6 feet (2 meters) of separation between tables.

"It was an honest mistake. I have apologized for it," Whitmer told reporters.

Violations of coronavirus orders are enforced against employers, not customers. State regulators have fined more than 280 employers.

Asked if the Landshark should be fined and, if not, if she would lift fines on other businesses, the governor said the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration has "specifically not gone forward and penalized businesses that are trying to do the right thing. It's those that have flouted and put people's safety at risk that are the most concerning." □

Police capture man wanted in 4 killings after week on run

By JEFFREY COLLINS

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — A weeklong manhunt for a suspect wanted in the killings of four people ended without another shot fired Monday morning as hundreds of officers surrounded him in South Carolina, authorities said.

Neither Tyler Terry nor the more than 300 officers searching for him were hurt during his arrest, the Chester County Sheriff's Office posted on Twitter. The manhunt finally ended after at least three confirmed sightings of Terry since he ran from a wrecked car after firing on Chester County deputies on May 17.

Deputies released photos of Terry's arrest showing an officer giving him a bottle of sports drink as he sat on a pickup tailgate with his hands cuffed behind him. Terry was wearing dirty pants, socks with no shoes and a T-shirt ripped nearly in half.

Investigators didn't think Terry was getting help from anyone but broke into vehicles — or possibly barns and sheds — and lived off the land. He managed to steal a gun, water, shirt and shoes from an unlocked work truck last week, authorities said.

Terry apparently spent the week in the same small area, eluding dozens of officers who methodically shrunk where they



In this photo provided by the Chester County Sheriff's Office, Tyler Terry is offered water during his arrest in South Carolina on Monday, May 24, 2021.

Associated Press

searched and staying out of sight of helicopters that were overhead most of the time, Chester County Sheriff Max Dorsey said.

Terry was hiding in weeds when a team of federal agents spotted him. He had a gun nearby but was grabbed before he could react, Dorsey said.

"He was certainly ready to run. But he was surrounded," Dorsey said at a Monday news conference.

Terry, 26, is charged with murder in a shooting in York in early May, the killing in Great Falls of the

estranged husband of the woman who drove the car as he fired at officers, and the deaths of two other people in Missouri on May 15 during robberies in the St. Louis suburbs, authorities said. Arrest warrants list Terry's address as Great Falls. Sunday afternoon, deputies spotted Terry wearing no shoes and all black clothing crossing a highway. Dorsey said the search paused overnight because authorities were sure Terry was in their perimeter and they didn't want an encounter in the dark with a

possibly armed man that the sheriff said was "extremely fast and agile."

When the sun rose Monday, the push to find Terry began again and was successful.

"He was tired, thirsty," Dorsey said. "He's all cut up. He's got bug bites. His clothes are torn. He's exhausted."

The search grew from about 100 officers last week to 300 officers Monday. The seven-day manhunt in the same area for a suspect is one of the longest in recent memory in South Carolina.

"He's been homeless for some time and may have spent long periods of time living in the woods. I'm not saying he is Superman, but that could help explain some things," Chester County Sheriff's Office spokesperson Grant Suskin said.

The woman driving Terry was arrested after wrecking the car. Adrienne Simpson, 34, is charged along with Terry with killing Eugene Simpson, from whom she had been separated for several years. An arrest warrant said she confessed that both she and Terry shot the father of her children, and that she helped dump his body in a ditch.

Simpson, who had a black eye in her booking photo, was the victim when Terry was arrested on a first-degree criminal domestic violence charge a year ago. Terry hit his girlfriend so hard that she lost hearing in one ear and an eye swelled shut, according to an arrest warrant from Chester.

Simpson's mother, who said she spoke with her after her arrest, said Terry was physically and mentally abusive and her daughter was scared of him but also loved him and thought he would change. The couple was together in Missouri and investigators are retracing their route as they traveled there from South Carolina to see if any other crimes were committed. □



This file booking photo provided by the Hennepin County, Minn., Sheriff shows Kim Potter, a former Brooklyn Center, Minn., police officer.

Associated Press

By AMY FORLITI

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A prosecutor who was co-

Prosecutor on Wright's death case resigns, citing 'vitriol'

counsel in the case against a former suburban Minneapolis police officer charged in the fatal shooting of Daunte Wright resigned Monday, saying "vitriol" and "partisan politics" have made it hard to pursue justice.

The resignation of Imran Ali, the assistant criminal division chief at the Washington County Attorney's Office, came just days after it was announced that his office would no longer handle prosecution of Kim Potter, the former Brooklyn Center officer who fatally shot Wright, a 20-year-old

Black motorist, on April 11. Potter resigned, and the city's police chief, who has since stepped down, had said he believed Potter meant to use her Taser instead of her handgun.

Ali and Washington County Attorney Pete Orput had charged Potter with second-degree manslaughter — then faced intense pressure from activists who protested multiple times outside Orput's home and called for murder charges to be filed.

On Friday, Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison announced that his office

would be taking the case. "The last several weeks have been difficult for me and my family," Ali wrote in a resignation letter dated Monday and published by KARE-11.

Ali wrote that he prays for healing and for the dissipation of partisan platforms.

"We must return to thoughtful discourse that unites, not impulsive, irrational talking points that divide," he wrote. "Until then, there will be no justice or peace."

Orput had said publicly that he believed manslaughter was the appropriate charge. Ellison said

Friday that a review of the evidence and the charges against Potter is underway, but he did not indicate whether murder charges would be filed.

Orput's office had been handling the Potter case under an agreement signed last year in which Minneapolis-area prosecutors said they would take each other's cases in which someone dies after an officer uses force.

Last week Orput gave the case back to Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman, then Ellison took it at Freeman's request. □

Iran agrees to extend deal on cameras at its nuclear sites

By PHILIPP JENNE and JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — Iran and the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog agreed Monday to a one-month extension to a deal on surveillance cameras at Tehran's atomic sites, buying more time for ongoing negotiations seeking to save the country's tattered nuclear deal with world powers.

The last-minute discussions, including the International Atomic Energy Agency pushing back a statement planned for Sunday, further underscored the narrowing window for the U.S. and others to reach terms with Iran as it presses a tough stance with the international community over its atomic program. The Islamic Republic is already enriching and stockpiling uranium at levels far beyond those allowed by its 2015 nuclear deal.

Speaking at a news conference Monday in Vienna, IAEA Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi told journalists that came after a discussion with Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of Iran's civilian nuclear program. He acknowledged that challenges remain, however,



Director General of International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, Rafael Mariano Grossi from Argentina, addresses the media during a news conference behind plexiglass shields regarding the agency's monitoring of Iran's nuclear energy program at the International Center in Vienna, Austria, Monday, May 24, 2021.

as the agency still can't access images taken by its cameras.

"I'd want to stress this is not ideal," Grossi said. "This is like an emergency device that we came up with in order for us to continue having these monitoring activities."

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's representative to the IAEA, acknowledged the deal at the same time on Twitter.

He said Tehran's civilian nuclear agency, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, would keep the material already recorded by the IAEA cameras.

"We recommend the negotiating countries to seize the extra opportunity provided by Iran in good faith for the complete lifting of sanctions in a practical and verifiable manner," Gharibabadi wrote.

Under a confidential agreement called an "Additional Protocol" with Iran, the IAEA collects and analyzes images from a series of surveillance cameras installed at Iranian nuclear sites. Those cameras helped it monitor Tehran's program to see if it is complying with the nuclear deal.

Iran's hard-line parliament in December approved a bill that would suspend part

of U.N. inspections of its nuclear facilities if European signatories did not provide relief from oil and banking sanctions by February.

The IAEA then struck a three-month deal with Iran in February to have it hold the surveillance images, with Tehran threatening to delete them afterward if no deal had been reached.

Iran since has broken all the deal's limits after then-President Donald Trump in 2018 unilaterally withdrew America from the accord. Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of Iran's civilian program, said Monday that Tehran had stockpiled 5 tons of uranium enriched up to 5% purity, 90 kilograms (198 pounds) enriched up to 20% and 2.5 kilograms (5.5 pounds) up to 60%. That's still below weapons-grade levels of 90% purity. Iran long has maintained its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. The West fears it could be used to help Tehran potentially obtain an atomic bomb, though U.S. intelligence agencies say they "assess that Iran is not currently undertaking the key nuclear weapons-development activities ... necessary to produce a nuclear device." □

Associated Press

Indigenous woman named New Zealand's next governor-general

By NICK PERRY

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — Children's advocate Cindy Kiro said Monday she hopes to inspire Maori girls after becoming the first Indigenous woman appointed to the role of governor-general. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced she had picked Kiro for the largely ceremonial role as Queen Elizabeth II's representative, and that the queen had approved.

Under New Zealand's constitutional system, the British monarch remains the nation's head of state although doesn't wield any real day-to-day power.

Kiro's five-year term be-

gins in October, when she will replace Patsy Reddy. Both women have been given the honorific

"Dame" for their services to the community.

Kiro, 63, said her mixed Maori and British heritage

helped give her a good understanding of New Zealand history and the Treaty of Waitangi, the founding document signed by Maori and British. Kiro is currently chief executive of the Royal Society, a nonprofit group which advocates for research. She was previously the nation's Children's Commissioner and has held leadership roles at several universities.

"Over many decades, Dame Cindy has demonstrated her passion for the wellbeing of children and young people, as well as education and learning," Ardern said.

Kiro said she grew up in humble circumstances and her career had been

driven by a sense of the importance of service.

Asked if it was appropriate in modern times for the queen to remain New Zealand's head of state, Kiro did not answer directly.

"Well, clearly I accept the queen as the head of state of the Commonwealth and I'm here to support her," Kiro said, adding that "This is the constitution we have, and I look forward to basically using it to serve the country."

Ardern said she believed New Zealand would one day become a republic but she didn't get a sense that people urgently wanted change, and so the issue hasn't been a priority for her government. □



Cindy Kiro, left, and Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, right, walk together through Parliament Building Monday, May 24, 2021, in Wellington, New Zealand.

Associated Press

U.S. reaches out to Palestinian leaders many angrily reject

By **JOSEPH KRAUSS**

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — After weeks of unrest and a devastating 11-day war in Gaza, the U.S. and the international community plan to engage with the Palestinians to revive peace efforts.

But when U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken visits on Tuesday, he will meet with Palestinian leaders who were sidelined by the protests and outmaneuvered by the militant Hamas group and who seem to be more despised by Palestinians than at any time in their long reign.

The Palestinian Authority is no closer to statehood than it was when Mahmoud Abbas, now 85, was elected president in 2005 after the death of Yasser Arafat, and the Palestinians are far more deeply divided. Abbas called off the first elections in 15 years last month, when it looked like his splintering Fatah party would suffer an embarrassing defeat.

However, the PA maintains close security ties with Israel and is deeply invested in the idea of a two-state solution. Internationally, that's seen as the only way to resolve the conflict, even though there have been no substantive peace talks in more than a decade.

The Islamic militant group



In this May 13, 2021 file photo, smoke rises following Israeli airstrikes on a building in Gaza City. **Associated Press**

Hamas won a landslide victory in the last elections in 2006 and was poised to do well again. But it does not recognize Israel's right to exist and is blacklisted as a terrorist organization. The protests in Jerusalem and elsewhere are mostly leaderless. "The option is either to engage with Hamas or an incredibly unrepresentative and defunct governing somewhat of a governing authority that holds absolutely no legitimacy," said Tahani Mustafa, an analyst at the Crisis Group, an international think tank. Israel and the U.S. appear to be taking the second

route, with officials in both countries saying they hope to strengthen the PA at the expense of Hamas, something that has been tried and failed repeatedly since Hamas seized power in Gaza from Abbas' forces in 2007. Many Palestinians have come to see the PA as part of an entrenched and increasingly unbearable system of Israeli domination that extends far beyond the occupied West Bank, where the PA administers major population centers under overarching Israeli control.

Their anger boiled over last month with protests and

clashes in Jerusalem that eventually spread across the region, drawing in Palestinian citizens of Israel and triggering the Gaza war.

It was on vivid display at Friday prayers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the combustible holy site at the heart of the recent unrest, when thousands of Palestinian worshippers chanted "Dogs of the authority, get out!" in response to a sermon from a PA-appointed mufti.

That was in sharp contrast to raucous rallies held at Al-Aqsa and elsewhere in support of Hamas and Mohammed Deif, the shad-

ow commander of the group's armed wing.

Unlike the PA, which released sternly-worded statements against Israel's policing of Al-Aqsa and attempts by Jewish settlers to evict dozens of families from a nearby neighborhood, Deif issued an ultimatum. When time ran out, Hamas fired long-range rockets that disrupted an Israeli parade celebrating its claims to the city.

That triggered a devastating Gaza war that killed more than 250 people, the vast majority of them Palestinians, and caused widespread destruction in the impoverished territory.

But it also allowed Hamas to portray itself as a wily defender of Jerusalem, to which both sides in the Middle East conflict have deeply emotional ties, and to say it had struck a blow against the far more powerful Israel.

Mkhaimar Abusada, a political science professor at Al-Azhar University in Gaza, says that even there support for Hamas has risen amid widespread disappointment with the PA.

"At the end of the day, it's Israel that destroyed these buildings," he said. "We suffer because of Israeli occupation, we suffer because of Israeli oppression... The Palestinians are not going to blame Hamas." □

Belarus president signs tough new law on media restrictions

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The authoritarian president of Belarus on Monday signed a law sharply restricting news media activities and allowing them to be shut down without a court hearing.

The move by President Alexander Lukashenko came a day after the arrest of a prominent opposition journalist whose commercial flight was forcibly diverted to Belarus because of an alleged bomb threat. The arrest and flight diversion was condemned by Western countries and drew new attention to Belarus' crackdown on media since widespread protests against Lukashenko arose last year. Under the new law, news media are banned from making live reports on unauthorized mass gatherings. It also allows the Information Ministry to order a media outlet's closure; previously media closures

required a court decision.

Other strictures include prohibiting publication of the results of opinion polls that aren't authorized by the government.

"This is the most repressive media law in Europe, which turns the work of journalists in Belarus into a minefield," said Andrei Bastunets, president of the Belarusian Association of Journalists.

Widespread protests rocked Belarus for weeks last year, following an allegedly fraudulent election that gave Lukashenko a sixth term in office. More than 30,000 people were arrested in the protests, many of them beaten by police.

The country has steadily cracked down on journalists, including blocking several major news websites and declaring opposition-minded messaging app channels to be extremist. □



In this Monday April 26, 2021 file photo, Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko, accompanied by officials, attends a requiem rally on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster in the town of Bragin, some 360 km (225 miles) south-east of Minsk, Belarus.

Associated Press

Lava from Congo's volcano eruption emits toxic gas, 7 dead

By JEAN-YVES KAMALE

Associated Press

KINSHASA, Congo (AP) —

Seven more people have died as a result of the recent volcano eruption in eastern Congo, increasing the death toll to 22.

Those killed Monday died from inhaling toxic gas when they were walking across a wide expanse of the cooling lava near the eastern city of Goma, the scientific director of the Volcanic Observatory of Goma, Celestin Kasereka Mahinda, told The Associated Press.

They were traveling on the road between Kibati and Goma that was cut off by a flow of lava 1,000 meters (about a half-mile) wide, he said.

"The population of Goma must avoid unnecessary travel, but also not visit places that have been hit by lava from the volcano because these lavas are toxic and harmful," he said. With little warning Mount Nyiragongo turned the dark sky fiery red on Saturday night and then spewed torrents of lava into villages, killing at least 15 people and destroying more than 500 homes, officials and



Lava from the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo cuts through Buhene north of Goma, Congo Monday, May 24, 2021.

survivors said. On Monday residents searched for missing loved ones amid their destroyed homes on the outskirts of Goma, where light aftershocks were detected following the weekend eruption. Fumes rose from the cooling lava that covered part of the Nyiragongo region.

Grief, disbelief and fear hung over the area as a delegation of government

ministers, including Congo's health minister, visited Goma after flying in from neighboring Rwanda.

Scientists at the volcano observatory weren't able to adequately warn the public of the eruption because of a funding cut, Mahinda said.

"The observatory no longer has the support of the central government or of external donors, which explains

why the volcanic eruption was such a surprise," Mahinda told The Associated Press. A partnership between the government and the World Bank that had supported the observatory was cut in October 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic, leaving the observatory without even internet, he said. The observatory had just started to resume opera-

tions last month thanks to new funding from the U.S. Geological Survey's Volcano Disaster Assistance Program, which means the observatory can at least gather data after the eruption, he said.

The volcano remains active and earthquake tremors are being recorded, he said, calling on the population to remain vigilant.

"The government team dispatched expressly here in Goma, following the volcanic eruption which caused a lot of damage in the city," Minister of Public Health Jean-Jacques Mbungani said. "It is important that a strong signal from our government is given. We will have discussions with the military governor as well as with all the stakeholders so that we can identify avenues for quick solutions for the population."

The military governor of North Kivu province, Lt. Gen. Constant Ndima called on the population of Goma not to send children to school. Goma's international airport of Goma and the airport in Kavumu in South Kivu province were closed for security reasons, he said in a statement. □

Associated Press

India virus death toll passes 300,000, 3rd highest in world

By SHEIKH SAALIQ

Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — India crossed another grim milestone Monday with more than 300,000 people lost to the coronavirus, while a devastating surge of infections appeared to be easing in big cities but was swamping the poorer countryside. The milestone, as recorded by India's Health Ministry, comes as slowed vaccine deliveries have marred the country's fight against the pandemic, forcing many to miss their shots, and a rare but fatal fungal infection affecting COVID-19 patients has worried doctors.

India's death toll is the third-highest reported in the world after the U.S. and Brazil, accounting for 8.6% of the nearly 3.47 million coronavirus fatalities globally, though the true numbers are thought to be significantly greater.

The Health Ministry on Monday reported 4,454 new deaths in the last 24 hours, bringing India's total fatalities to 303,720.

It also reported 222,315 new infections, which raised the overall total to nearly 27 million since the pandemic began. Both are almost certainly undercounts.

From the remote Himalayan villages in the north, through the vast humid central plains and to the sandy beaches in the south, the pandemic has swamped India's underfunded health care system after spreading quickly across the country. In the capital, New Delhi, residents have died at home with no oxygen as hospitals exhausted limited supplies. In Mumbai, COVID-19 patients have died in crowded hospital corridors. In rural villages, fever and breathlessness took people before they were even tested for coronavirus.

While the megacities have seen signs of improvement in recent days, the virus isn't finished with India by any means. It appears to have already taken a ghastly toll in the country's vast rural areas, where a majority of the people live and where health care is limited. □



A relative in protective suit performs last rituals as the body of a person who died of COVID-19 is cremated in Gauhati, India, Monday, May 24, 2021.

Associated Press

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Opportunity to submit nominations for Royal decorations

ORANJESTAD - As was the case in previous years, it is again possible, starting May 26, on the occasion of the celebration of King's Day 2022, to nominate persons to be considered for a Royal decoration, popularly said, to receive a "Ribbon" to be distinguished.

Everywhere in Aruba people are committed to the Aruban community. Very often they do this in silence and in the background, but these people should be put in the limelight. Someone can earn a ribbon if there are special personal merits to society.

This can be voluntary work, but also a special fulfillment of a paid main job or a combination of both:

- These are volunteers who are selflessly com-



mitted to organizations, groups, neighborhoods or people in the field of sports, art, culture, religion, nature, the social field, youth work, care for the elderly, public order and safety, etc. for 15 years or more.

- Someone who performs exceptional at

work may also qualify. In such a case it concerns a special and exceptional merit in the work that goes considerably further than what can normally be expected and from which society benefits.

In case you know such a person, you can nominate this person to receive special recognition by means of a royal decoration. Such a nomination can be submitted by anyone, including organizations or agencies. All proposals must be submitted in writing using two special forms. These forms with the accompanying instructions and explanations are available from May 26, 2021 during office hours at the desk of the Administrative Office in Oranjestad and San Nicolas or from the members of the Decoration Committee Aruba. The forms will also be available on the government website: www.government.aw

In Aruba, the Aruba Decoration Committee is

charged with processing the nominations and the accompanying investigation. The nominations go to the Netherlands through the official channels, where they are dealt with by the Dutch Chapter for the Civil Orders. In order to properly assess the merits of the nominee, it is very important that all requested information is provided as complete and extensive as possible. The forms must be completely filled in and signed and the nomination must be properly substantiated. Decoration Committee Aruba emphasizes that the Royal decoration should be a surprise for the person concerned. It is therefore extremely important NOT to inform the nominated candidate of the nomination and not to involve it in completing the forms. This also prevents disappointment if the award is not awarded. The deadline for submission of nominations for a Royal decoration for the year 2022 is 6 August 2021.


Unfortunately, incomplete

nominations and nominations that arrive after this date cannot be processed. Both the Decoration Committee Aruba and the Dutch Chapter for the Civil Orders will only consider full and timely nominations received.


The nominations must be handed in in a sealed envelope at the desk of the Administrative Office in Oranjestad. The envelope is addressed to the Decoration Committee Aruba, c/o Office of the Minister of General Affairs, 76 LG Smith Boulevard, Oranjestad, Aruba.

The Decoration Committee Aruba is very pleased that many nominations come in every year and hopes that many people from the Aruban community will also be recognized for the important work they do for the community and receive a well-deserved ribbon for the celebration of King's Day 2022. For more information direct your email to condeco.aruba@gmail.com

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permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook

page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a wonderful picture from William Murphy saying:

"As a native born Aruban at Lago Hospital in 1961, Aruba to me is folks like my friend Clyde Harms. Clyde worked for my Dad at Lago in the 1950's. So Happy to visit him every time I return to my birth Island. June 1st is his 90th birthday." □

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Article by Etnia Nativa

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Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



Native tree gourds or calbas

Episode CVI - 106

NOORD — Since the beginning of time people have collected and selected all kinds of objects and things for an infinite use and reasons; plants were used to build shelters, bridges and transportation, for food, medicine, color pigments, to weave clothing and ropes, for musical instruments, tools and weapons, and all sorts of unimaginable things. The gourd was used a storage container, a gourd may hold harvested fruits, nuts, and crops or as a tool to serve and transport food and liquids.

Dried gourds where a stick is inserted through as a handle and filled with seeds as a shaker are called maracas, used to keep the rhythm during festivals and magic's ceremonies. There are approximately 850 species of plants which fruits, offer well-known natural light and beautiful biodegradable containers. Some offers a great variety of colors, others had flavor in a variety of shapes and sizes and shape; Some grew on trees others grew on vines from the spherical to the bottle-shaped, some were edibles. Many originated in Mexico and Peru. Different gourds form different species were very much sought after and appreciated in Europe for practical and decorative purposes. Like many religious and metaphysical symbols, the gourd has a dual purpose: the gourd is represented as a maraca and the womb which carries seeds of fertil-



ity, here by representing a culturally symbolic musical instrument. When a gourd is used as a water container, it may also be considered a carrier of life. Without water there is no life. Unlike a harvested crop which must be uprooted from the earth and loses its life force, water is in a continuous state of living. Long before the Europeans arrived the Guarani drank mate, a South-American tea, in containers made of gourds where they mixed medicinal and aromatic herbs. This is how different gourds and calbas play important roles in different cultures. In the Taino creation myth it represents disbelief and the loss of faith and was used in the divination rites of the Taínos, in this tribe there is a story that tells that the Tainos in the desire to 'see' Yayael murdered warrior who they were invoking in a ritual believing that Yayael was physi-

cally inside the calbas, for this reason, happy in their eagerness to grab him, they spilled its contents. When they realize that the contents of the gourd have turned into a fish, they give in to physical temptation and ate the fish. In this first myth, the pumpkins are represented as a tomb for dead beings and a womb for living beings. □

To get to know more over Aruba's and its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit for our renowned cultural encounter session has been entertaining curious participants for decades.

Mail us at etnianativa03@gmail.com to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels.



What's in the cards for after the pandemic?

by Cdr. Bud Slabbaert

How serious can we take the various messages and forecasts about the post-pandemic era? In essence, many of them boil down to telling the audience that if their feet are numb, polishing their shoes is the ultimate solution, because it will reflect the sunshine. That can make some people obscenely loaded. Yet, others become profanely depressed especially in situations when they cannot afford more than wearing flip-flops. Post-crisis predictions are often made by persons wanting to prove that they have a firm hold of the rudder, for an audience that hopes that there is ship attached to that rudder. If you ask me what I honestly think of all the prophesying? I'm hung up between Shakespeare's "I'm not bound to please thee with my answer" or "Give thy thoughts no tongue nor any unproportioned act".

What about pledges? What is a pledge worth of persons if it is essentially about themselves? That is egocentric! How about

pledges to help others who are in need? A pledge to actually and actively become involved, or taking an initiative that can have a positive impact on community or society? Enjoy today's day but why not getting at it tomorrow and become a noble 'Knight'.

A Knight was known for gladly sharing his resources and possessions with the needy. A Knight will give his last bit of food to a hungry person, even if he must go without food himself. Have you recently heard about any political leader or affluent business leader anywhere around, willing to donate some of his salary to help the needy in the community? I have not, but..., I may have missed something. Let's count how many raise their hand. How come we have so few Knights nowadays. Too old-fashioned maybe for modern society? Still, many like to make others believe that they are a Knight by wearing the shining armor on the outside but lacking the spirit of chivalry inside.

Forget about becoming famous or popular. Forget about becoming a millionaire. I know people who are going after their second million because they were not able to make the first million. Why not pledge to just four things that are entirely realistic for one, and will make you the most popular person in the community and beyond:

1. Servant leadership: willing to serve others without a price tag attached to it
2. Kindness: being generous and considerate to others without expectations to get something in return
3. Humility: putting others ahead of yourself
4. Honesty: always being truthful; no falsehood, no misleading and no misinformation

Entirely realistic, unless...? Unless you lack self-discipline, excellence, loyalty, integrity, and perseverance. Talking about a passed tough twelve months plus period, the challenge to stick to these

four pledges in the next months or longer may even be tougher.

Some useful advice for those who are claiming to be leaders and are considering making a pledge for the future. If the bottom is fallen out of almost everything but you, it is time for a new approach. Forces of change nowadays are requiring transformation at speeds not considered realistic before. Who leads in change will thrive. Others, only managing change, will not thrive but barely arrive. And the rest... will survive while suffering along the way.

Oh, you already have a plan? Congratulations! So do boxers when they enter the ring! They usually have a plan until they're hit by a right hook punch. Or was it a left hook punch? I forgot. It can come either or both ways, I guess. Of course, one could just stick to old ideas like chewing gum to a shoe sole. The fact is that change is happening. Thus, you better intend to make changes to actively creat-

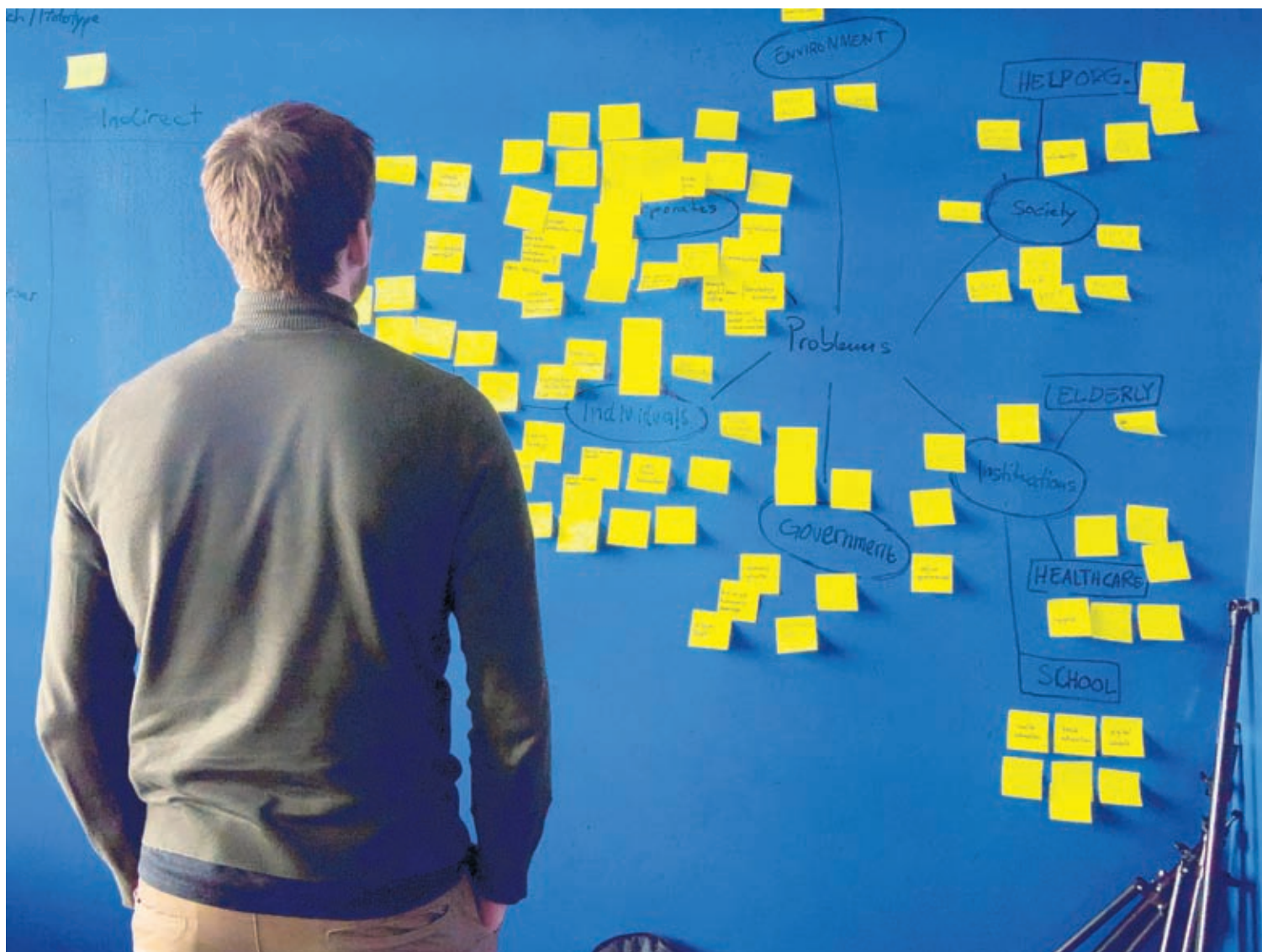


ing a new normal yourself, rather than passively waiting for a new normal that is actually already out of date by the time it arrives. Fortunately, I happen to know of an alternative solution for those who prefer a shortcut instead of going through the rough terrain.

On the island St.Tosia they sell "Docdoc Lizard Oil with Bull Sacrifice" for people seeking prosperity and financial advancement. I'm not sure if you can order it online and have it delivered at your place. It is extremely popular among spiritual stock market speculators. They are claiming that during economic turbulence, the brew has cured them of everything from depression to seizures by applying the potion behind both ears and then let it have its effect between the ears. This elixir that promises to cure where all else fails, comes in elegant boutique-style bottles with a little glossy black card hanging from a shiny golden ribbon at the bottleneck. It has just two words on it in gold embossed Trebuchet lettering: "Good Luck".

About:

Cdr. Bud Slabbaert is the Chairman and Coordinator of the Caribbean Aviation Meetup, an annual results and solution oriented conference for stakeholders of 'airlift' in the Caribbean. Mr. Slabbaert's background is accentuated by aviation business development, strategic communication, and journalism.



Liz Weston: How to be a better long-distance caregiver

By LIZ WESTON of NerdWallet

Long pandemic lockdowns forced many older adults to become comfortable with video calls to stay connected with family. That in turn means that long-distance caregivers have a better way to see how their loved ones are faring.

"You can't tell on the phone that they're wearing the same clothes every day, or they're not bathing because they're afraid they'll fall in the shower," says Amy Goyer, AARP's national family and caregiving expert and the author of "Juggling Life, Work, and Caregiving."

More than 1 in 10 caregivers look after family or friends from a distance, which can make the task much more difficult and expensive. A 2016 AARP survey found that caregivers in general incur an average of about \$7,000 a year in out-of-pocket expenses. Long-distance caregivers those who live at least an hour away from the care recipient incur about \$12,000 on average, according to the survey. Long-distance caregivers are more likely than local caregivers to hire help, take unpaid time off work and pay for travel, Goyer says.

Yet many distant caregivers worry they're not doing enough and that a preventable crisis will develop



This undated file photo provided by NerdWallet shows Liz Weston, a columnist for personal finance website NerdWallet.com.

because they weren't on hand to spot the red flags. "As caregivers, guilt is our constant companion," Goyer says. "When you're a long-distance caregiver, it's even more so."

AARP has numerous resources for caregivers, including a "Prepare to Care" planning guide and a financial workbook for estimating and tracking costs. Goyer, who cared for her grandparents, parents and a sister from afar, suggests the following ideas to

make long-distance caregiving more effective and manageable.

ASSEMBLE A TEAM

If you can't physically check in on your loved one regularly, enlist others who can, Goyer says. Those could include family members or friends who live closer, or even a friendly neighbor to whom you can give your contact information.

"You may say, 'Hey, if you notice grass isn't getting mowed, things around the house look like they're not

being kept up, will you let me know?'" Goyer suggests.

If you have siblings, they can pitch in even if they're long-distance too, Goyer says. They can make daily check-in calls or handle tasks such as paying bills, making medical appointments and dealing with insurance companies.

If you have the means, consider hiring a geriatric care manager, also known as an aging life care professional, to help you evaluate your loved one's caregiving needs, hire home health aides if necessary and step in if there's a crisis. These professionals, who are often nurses or social workers, typically charge \$75 to \$200 an hour. An initial assessment may cost a few hundred dollars, but then the manager can be tapped as needed.

"If my parents had to go to the hospital or some emergency happened, there had to be somebody right away who could deal with it," Goyer says.

EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY

Video calling isn't the only technology that can make life easier for long-distance caregivers. Medical alert systems can allow a loved one to summon aid, and some have fall detection technology that works even if the person isn't wearing a special device. Smart pill dispensers manage medi-

cations, and some can let caregivers know if doses aren't taken. Smart home systems can also help. A smart door lock, for example, can allow you to grant access to someone such as a friend, a health aide or a paramedic from afar. A smart thermostat can help you ensure a comfortable temperature, while a smart home security system can let you know if your loved one has left the house. Goyer used security cameras to keep an eye on her dad "whether I was going outside to take out the trash or 2,000 miles away."

MAXIMIZE AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Your loved one may be eligible for public benefits that could help with caregiving tasks or costs. Start your search at Benefits.gov. Resources for older Americans can also be found through the Eldercare Locator at <https://eldercare.acl.gov/>.

Goyer's father suffered from dementia for many years, but only during the last year of his life did she learn that he qualified for health care benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"I wish I'd gotten him into VA health care earlier, because they ended up covering incontinence supplies and medications and a lot of things that I had been paying for," Goyer says. □

Peloton plans to build first U.S. factory in Ohio, add 2K jobs

Peloton plans to spend about \$400 million to build its first U.S. factory in Ohio. The exercise equipment



In this Sept. 26, 2019 file photo, the Peloton logo is displayed on the company's stationary bicycle in New York.

Associated Press

maker said Monday that the Peloton Output Park will make the Peloton Bike, Bike+ and Peloton Tread starting in 2023. It will have more than 200 acres and more than 1 million square feet of manufacturing, office and amenities space. Peloton Interactive Inc. said it plans to break ground on the site in Troy Township over the summer. The company anticipates adding more than 2,000 jobs in Ohio over the next few years. Positions will span corporate, manufacturing, assembly and quality assurance functions.

The New York-based company employs about 3,700 people, according to FactSet. Peloton has faced surging demand during the pandemic. It reported that revenue in the first three months of the year more than doubled on strong subscription growth. Last December, the company spent \$420 million to acquire Precor, a company whose fitness machines populate hundreds of commercial and hotel gyms. That deal gave Peloton its first manufacturing capacity in the U.S.

"While we will continue to

invest in our Asian manufacturing footprint as well as our existing facilities in the U.S. via our Precor sites, the new Peloton Output Park gives us a massive strategic lever to make sure we have capacity, quality, and economies of scale in our bike and tread product lines, to support our continued growth for years and years to come," said Peloton CEO John Foley. The plans still need final approvals from state and local officials.

Shares of Peloton fell less than 2% in afternoon trading. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 41 Public
1 May outburst
honorees

5 Monastery group
figure

10 Limerick scraps
people

12 Half of
Hispaniola

13 Effect
badly

15 Greek
vowel

16 Method

17 Firewood
unit

18 American
tree

20 Lawn
pest

21 Motherless
calf

22 Some
sheep

23 Tale
tellers

25 Increase

28 BLT base

31 High
cards

32 Like old
cars

34 Summer
shirt

35 In shape

36 Words
before
dime or
dare

37 Eye
quickly

40 Deal
maker

DOWN

1 Bishop's
topper

2 Made
speeches

3 Japanese
emperor

4 Toronto-to-
D.C. dir.

5 Sailor's
cry

6 Dance, in
France

7 Swell with
air

8 Peter of
"Troy"

9 Slight
colors

11 Land of
the lei

14 Go on
vacation

19 Eyes

20 Buttes'

24 Highways

25 Wicker
material

26 Glacial
time

27 Harry
Potter, in
Quidditch

29 "Dracula"
author

30 Lease
signer

33 Calendar
items

35 Music's
Waller

38 Finale

39 Green
prefix

A	C	M	E		A	L	O	H	A	
C	H	A	D		M	O	R	A	S	S
H	A	R	M		P	R	E	L	I	M
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S	T	O	N	E	R	S		F	I	R
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Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12			
13					14				
15				16				17	
18			19				20		
	21						22		
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25	26	27			28			29	30
31					32				33
34				35				36	
37			38					39	
40						41			
42								43	

5-25

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-25

CRYPTOQUOTE

C`QM ZKXZRA PZH Z HLOT

GMVAESZKCUR. OZKJ ZNEQM

XZUMV. YMMU IEC SI OVZDR

NMKEX. — T. YKZR

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: TIME CHANGES EVERYTHING EXCEPT SOMETHING WITHIN US WHICH IS ALWAYS SURPRISED BY CHANGE. — THOMAS HARDY

Grim western fire season starts much drier than record 2020



In this Sept. 9, 2020, file photo, flames lick above vehicles on Highway 162 as the Bear Fire burns in Oroville, Calif.

Associated Press

By SETH BORENSTEIN

As bad as last year's record-shattering fire season was, the western U.S. starts this year's in even worse shape. The soil in the West is record dry for this time of year. In much of the region, plants that fuel fires are also the driest scientists have seen. The vegetation is primed to ignite, especially in the Southwest where dead juniper trees are full of flammable needles. "It's like having gasoline out there," said Brian Steinhart, forest fire zone manager for Prescott and Coconino national forests in Arizona.

A climate change-fueled megadrought of more than 20 years is making conditions that lead to fire even more dangerous, scientists said. Rainfall in the Rockies and farther west was the second lowest on record in April, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"It means that the dice are loaded toward a lot of forest fire this year," said Park Williams, a UCLA climate and fire scientist, who calculated that soil in the western half of the nation is the driest it has been since 1895. "This summer we're going into fire season with drier fuels than we were at

this time last year."

In addition, the western drought is deepening week by week.

In late March, less than one-third of California was suffering extreme or exceptional drought. Now more than 73% is, according to the National Drought Monitor, which is based on precipitation, temperature, soil moisture and stream-flow measurements. A year ago, heading into the record-smashing 2020 fire year when more than 4% of California burned, just 3% of the state was in extreme or exceptional drought.

But the outlook is worse elsewhere.

"I think the Southwest is really primed for a bad fire season," University of Utah fire scientist Phil Dennison said. That's because last year's normal monsoon season, which brings much of the year's rainfall, never showed up.

A year ago, none of Arizona, Nevada and Utah was in extreme or exceptional drought, but now more than 90% of Utah, 86% of Arizona and 75% of Nevada is in those highest drought categories, according to the drought monitor. New Mexico jumped from 4% extreme or exceptional drought a year ago to more than 77% now.

UCLA meteorologist Daniel Swain, who also works for the National Center for Atmospheric Research and The Nature Conservancy, said key factors going into fire season are soil and plant wetness.

"So is soil moisture very low? Is vegetation extremely dry? Absolutely, yes. Unequivocally, yes. Pretty much everywhere in California and the Southwest," Swain said.

"So that box is checked big time in a way that is going to massively increase the potential background flammability ... given a spark, given extreme weather conditions."

This doesn't necessarily ensure the 2021 fire season will be worse than 2020. Last year more than 15,800 square miles (40,960 square kilometers) of the United States burned, an area about the size of Maryland and Delaware combined. Several scientists said last year's fires were stoked not just by hot, dry conditions, but by unusual situations that made a bad year horrific: Two intense heat waves one that nearly set a record for hottest temperature on Earth in Death Valley set the stage, and a freak California lightning barrage provided lots of spark. □

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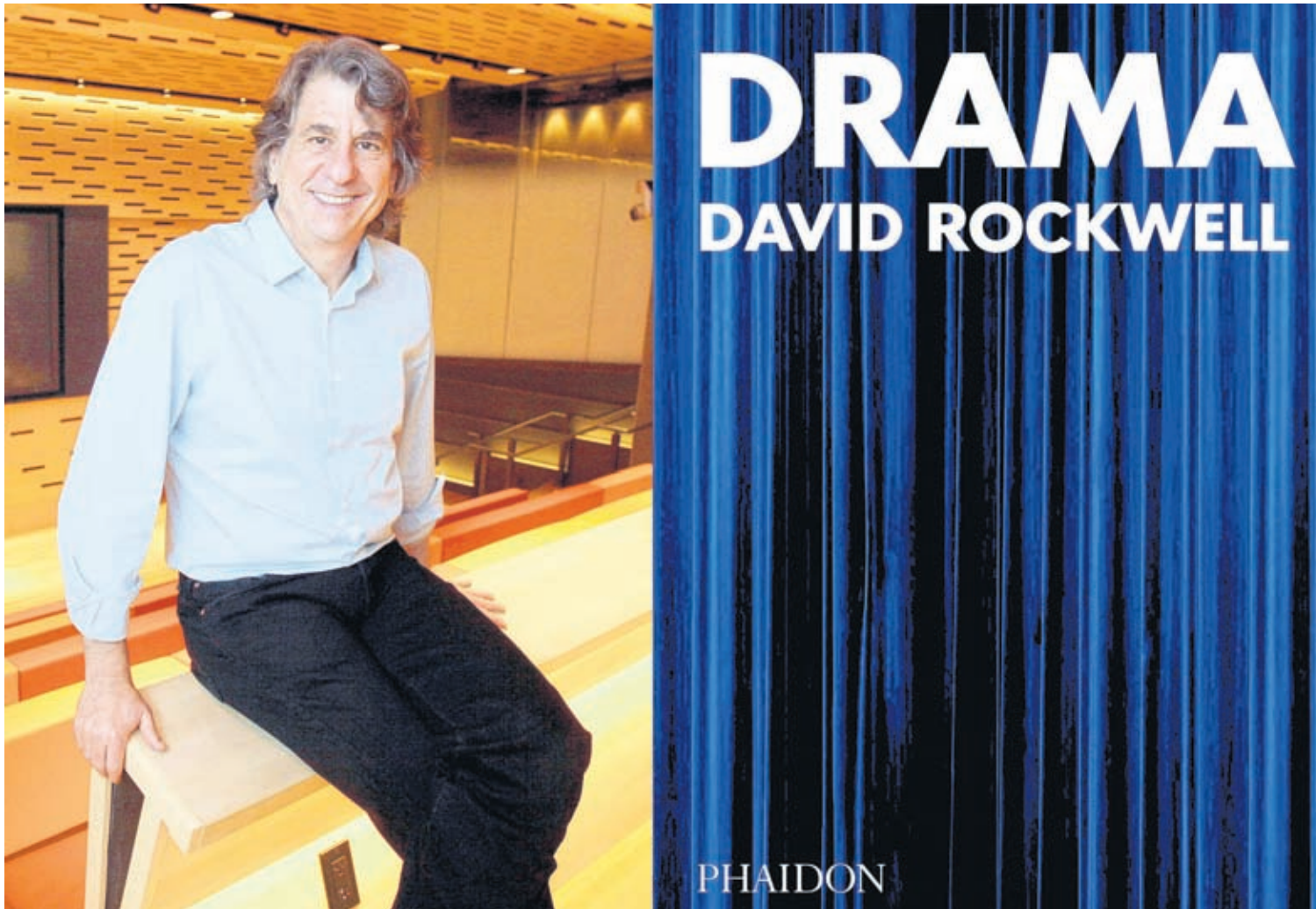
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Designer David Rockwell offers a guide to his creativity



This combination of photos shows architect and theater designer David Rockwell in the amphitheatre of the Film Society of Lincoln Center in New York on June 1, 2011, left, and the cover of his new book "Drama."

Associated Press

By MARK KENNEDY
AP Entertainment Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — The COVID-19 pandemic cut the connections between people and emptied the spaces they met. For award-winning architect and theater designer David Rockwell, it struck at the very heart of his work. From designing KAOS Nightclub in Las Vegas to transforming Los Angeles's historic Union Station at the Oscars, creating spaces where people gather has always been the focus. Now that idea was actually dangerous. During his first Zoom meeting with newly remote members of his 250-person staff, Rockwell began with some grim humor against a backdrop of a frightened, locked-down city. "I opened up by saying, 'Well, here's the good news: At least we don't depend on creating experiences to bring people together for a living.' There was a sort of silence and I said, 'I'm joking. Actually, that is what we do. So we need to figure out ways we can do that.'" As the nation gingerly

emerges from quarantine, Rockwell is offering exactly that in book form: "Drama" — a kind of mood board for the way Rockwell sees the world and many ideas for what a new post-COVID-19 world could look like. "Drama" is firmly at the intersection of theater and architecture, using examples from inside and outside the firm to tease out six fundamental concepts both disciplines share: Audience, ensemble, worlds, story, journey and impermanence. "I've been thinking about this for sort of my whole adult life because I've never seen a boundary between architecture and theater," Rockwell says. "It's been more of a feedback loop for me." The book, written with Bruce Mau and published by Phaidon, is full of arresting images to explain the ideas. Like how his work designing the restaurant Nobu Downtown found creative ways around architectural restrictions or how the Spanish Steps in Rome are designed to pull

the eye toward the sacred. He writes: "For me, design is about bringing people together and making them feel something." Count no less than Frank Gehry as a fan. "David is a great leader and a great inspiration in the field of architecture, design, theater design, and, well, you name it," he said. "He is a voracious creator, but he is an equally great listener with boundless curiosity. 'Drama' shows you all sides of this great talent." Infused throughout the book is a relentlessly optimistic view that life can be made better and more beautiful if we start by simply designing better spaces, especially where people meet. "The act of making something is such a life-affirming thing," says Rockwell, who is donating his share of the royalties from the book to The Actors Fund. "One of the things designers can do is actually help build a solution." The Rockwell Group designs everything from cafes to theater sets. Rockwell's first

Broadway show was "The Rocky Horror Show" in 2000, and the credits started piling up: "Hairspray," "Legally Blonde," "The Normal Heart" and "Tootsie," among them. He won a Tony Award for "She Loves Me." His architecture affects his sets and vice versa. When he was designing JetBlue's \$800 million terminal in New York City, Rockwell convinced the airline to consult with Tony-winning director-choreographer Jerry Mitchell to improve passenger movement. The book illustrates a ranging, multi-disciplinary mind, including interviews with architect Daniel Libeskind, music producer and composer Quincy Jones, museum director and curator Thelma Golden, playwright and actor Anna Deavere Smith, chef and humanitarian José Andrés, and Oscar-winning production designer Adam Stockhausen. Rockwell has been thinking a lot about how we will emerge from lockdown and perhaps redefine what our public spaces mean,

especially our open-plan offices. "Post-COVID, I think movement patterns — choreography, understanding how people move, understanding adaptability — is going to be important for cities," he says. "We're in a period of redefinition. So what we're going to do in offices, why we need to go there, I think is all ripe for re-invention." Rockwell sees the continued need for Zoom meetings as one thing that will endure after the pandemic, but is still a fan of in-person meetings, which can trigger collaborations and fresh ideas. "All the planning that you put into designing something is to hopefully allow some spontaneous activities to happen," he says. "It's the 15 minutes in between meetings when you're running into someone getting a cup of coffee where you may have an idea that's not going to come from Zoom." He sees flexibility in the nation's future, like the giant blue foam blocks he created as playground equipment that puts the power of creation and collaboration in the hands of kids. The Rockwell Group has helped restaurants during the pandemic by designing modular outdoor eating spaces and dreaming up portable staging for theater companies. "There is opportunities for new creative ideas to come to market," he says. "There are spaces that are only used for three or four hours a day. Are there other uses we can use those for?" Rockwell recently showed his flexibility and style by creating an intimate cocktail lounge and gardens for the Oscar telecast, somehow managing to keep it socially distant but also elegant and keeping in tune with the earliest Oscars. "I felt that was a chance to anchor it in the history and the power of movies," he says. "It was a full-on. It was like being a student again. It was three all-nighters and lots of intense work in L.A. but totally satisfying." □

Team Hendrick heads home to try to pass the King of NASCAR

By JIM VERTUNO

AP Sports Writer

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Hendrick Motorsports tied The King in the rain, spray and mud of Texas. Now it's time to go home to see if it can pass Richard Petty as NASCAR's winningest team. Chase Elliott's victory in the rain-shortened Texas Grand Prix at Circuit of the Americas earned Hendrick Motorsports win No. 268 to tie Petty Enterprises for most Cup wins in NASCAR history. Next stop: Charlotte Motor Speedway on Sunday for the Coca-Cola 600 — home turf for team owner Rick Hendrick to possibly make more history. His organization has a record 11 wins in NASCAR's longest race.

"That's our home track. That track means a lot to us. Our shops are about a mile away," Hendrick said. "Everybody would be able to celebrate together. So that would be awesome because that is our home." Victory lane turned into memory lane for Hendrick after Elliott's win Sunday. The team owner reflected on his storied organization and the partnership that almost was when the team launched in 1984. "Richard Petty was going to be my first driver. I thought we had a deal. It didn't come together," Hendrick said. "The respect and ad-



Chase Elliott, left, poses with the trophy in Victory Lane after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Circuit of the Americas in Austin, Texas, Sunday, May 23, 2021.

Associated Press

miration I have for him and Kyle, that whole family, it's a big deal for me to be just mentioned with him." It would feel even better to beat him. The countdown to this day has been a long-time coming. Hendrick started the team with fewer than 20 full-time employees. It now has more than 600. He was a technical adviser for the Tom Cruise movie "Days of Thunder" and was one of the four original owners of the Charlotte Hornets. Through the years, he has battled leukemia, pleaded guilty to mail fraud and was later pardoned by

President Clinton. In 2004, a plane owned by Hendrick Motorsports crashed, killing all 10 people aboard, including Hendrick's son, brother and twin nieces. And while that initial Petty driving deal fell through, there have been other Hall of Fame drivers in the Hendrick garage. Jeff Gordon won 93 races and four championships driving for Hendrick. Jimmie Johnson won 83 races and a record-tying seven championships. Terry Labonte won 12 times and one championship. There were rough times too, like from 2017 to 2019 when Hendrick failed to advance

a driver into the championship round. "I've been through some good times, some bad times, at the top of the mountain, then couldn't hit our butt," Hendrick said. "Worked hard, kept going. I think the test of a real company is when you get in those lows, you don't point fingers and you don't jump ship; you just work." Hendrick recalled some of the milestone victories along the way. The 1-2-3 finish at Daytona in 1997. Johnson winning his seventh championship to tie Petty and the late Dale Earnhardt in the last race of

the season. Elliott winning the title in Phoenix in 2020. "Man, there's just so many. All of them are special," Hendrick said. The team certainly has a winning formula again. All four Hendrick drivers have won this season, with Elliott finally breaking through Sunday when NASCAR stopped the race because of the rain. It handed Elliott the 12th win of his career and made him the lucky driver to help the boss tie an important NASCAR milestone. "To tie Richard Petty obviously is a big one. The boss has been on us heavy about that record," Elliott said. "He wants that record." It mattered little to driver or team owner that the tying victory came in a race that was twice red-flagged in a downpour before it was finally called with 14 laps to go. Elliott, a road course master, was favored to win and got himself to the front at the right time. The poor conditions led to almost-blind driving down the long straightaway that unnerved some drivers and led to a couple of crashes that took out several cars. Kevin Harvick, whose car was knocked out in one of the crashes, called the conditions too dangerous to race. □

Bernal wins 16th stage to extend Giro lead; Caruso up to 2nd

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy

(AP) — Egan Bernal took a major step toward his second Grand Tour title by winning the wet and mountainous 16th stage of the Giro d'Italia on Monday. The 2019 Tour de France champion rode alone over the top of the snowy Giau Pass then carefully navigated the technical and wet descent into Cortina to add to his overall lead. Snow and rain throughout the Dolomites prompted organizers to drastically shorten what was slated to be the race's "queen" stage. Instead of a 212-kilometer (132-mile) route over three major mountain

passes, the stage followed a 153-kilometer (95-mile) route over only one major pass, the Giau. That was still enough for Bernal to leave his mark. The Colombian attacked on the Giau, caught the last remaining breakaway rider, Antonio Pedrero, and gained time on all of his challengers. "I wanted to put on a show. This is the type of cycling I like, tough stages like these," Bernal said. "It's a risk but I believed in myself and the team believed in me." Bernal, who rides for Ineos Grenadiers, crossed in 4 hours, 22 minutes and finished 27 seconds ahead

of Romain Bardet, who was quicker on the descent. Before crossing the finish line, Bernal had time to take his raincoat off and show off his pink jersey as he celebrated. Bernal also won the ninth stage, when he claimed the lead. "It's a victory with the pink jersey and I wanted to show it off," Bernal said. Damiano Caruso came third with the same time as Bardet and moved up from third to second overall, 2:24 behind Bernal. Hugh Carthy moved up from fifth to third, 3:40 back. Simon Yates, who was second overall entering the stage, was dropped on the





Colombia's Egan Bernal celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the 16th stage of the Giro d'Italia cycling race, from Sacile to Cortina D'Ampezzo, northern Italy, Monday, May 24, 2021.

Associated Press

Giau and fell to fifth. Two-time Giro winner Vincenzo Nibali was part of

an early six-man breakaway that fell apart on the Giau. □





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One more thrill: Phil Mickelson wins at 50 in raucous PGA

By **BEN NUCKOLS**

AP Sports Writer

KIAWAH ISLAND, S.C. (AP)

— Standing on the 18th tee with a two-shot lead in a championship he refused to imagine himself winning, Phil Mickelson took one last violent swing with a driver — the club that betrayed him 15 years earlier in the U.S. Open.

His tee shot Sunday in the PGA Championship at Kiawah Island landed only a few yards off the fairway, but it still nestled among the people — the gallery packed tightly between the ropes and a row of hospitality tents — screaming the name of their aging hero.

After Mickelson's approach shot settled on the green, assuring the 50-year-old of becoming the oldest major champion in history, the crowd swallowed him up entirely.

Phil Mickelson, the people's champion.

"It's an incredible experience. I've never had something like that," Mickelson said. "It was a little bit unnerving, but it was exceptionally awesome, too."

Golf can be cruel to veteran, sentimental favorites. Ben Hogan at the 1955 U.S. Open. Greg Norman at the 1996 Masters and the British Open a dozen years later. And, perhaps most heart-breaking, 59-year-old Tom Watson at the 2009 British Open.

Mickelson, too, has had as many close calls as major victories — most of them at the U.S. Open, where he's been runner-up six times. Winged Foot — where he gave away a one-shot lead on the 72nd hole in 2006 — wasn't the first, or the last.

But now, the two biggest stars of their generation have a signature late-ca-



Phil Mickelson celebrates after winning the final round at the PGA Championship golf tournament on the Ocean Course, Sunday, May 23, 2021, in Kiawah Island, S.C.

Associated Press

reer win. Tiger Woods overcame four back surgeries, turmoil in his personal life and 11 years of frustration in major championships to win the Masters two years ago at age 43.

Mickelson — happy at home and injury-free — merely stretched the limits of what's possible after a half-century on Earth.

"There's no reason why I or anybody else can't do it at a later age. It just takes a little more work," Mickelson said.

Nine days earlier, Mickelson accepted a special exemption to play in the U.S. Open at Torrey Pines in his hometown of San Diego. Now he's assured at least five more cracks at the lone major that has eluded him. The victory makes him exempt at the U.S. Open through 2025.

Already a Hall of Famer, Mickelson joined Nick Faldo and Lee Trevino as six-time major winners. Only 11 players have won more. If he somehow won another in his 50s, he'd match Ar-

nold Palmer, Bobby Jones, Gene Sarazen, Sam Snead and Harry Vardon.

The record will show Mickelson closed with a 1-over 73 for a two-shot win over Brooks Koepka (73) and Louis Oosthuizen (74). That doesn't begin to describe the wild fluctuations of Sunday on the menacing Ocean Course, where Mickelson and Koepka hit shots that were both spectacular and shocking, sometimes on the same hole.

Between them, Mickelson and Koepka made 16 pars, 10 bogeys, nine birdies and one double bogey. Five of the first 10 holes had swings of two shots or more — and that didn't include the par-3 fifth, when Mickelson holed out from a waste bunker with Koepka safely on the green.

Even with three bogeys in a five-hole stretch on the back nine, Mickelson hit enough good shots to avoid bigger numbers and hold off Koepka. Then came the bedlam on 18,

where Mickelson and Koepka fought their way through the crowd to get to the green.

There were no fans at last year's three major championships. Patrons returned to the Masters last month to cheer Hideki Matsuyama's breakthrough win. But this was golf's rowdiest gallery since before the COVID-19 pandemic, and it came at a time when the virus is receding in the U.S., with well over half of adults at least partially vaccinated.

Masks were rare among the crowd, which the PGA of America said was limited to 10,000 people a day. Fans pressed five-deep against the ropes, stumbled atop steep dunes and clambered into trees on the sprawling Ocean Course.

Golf, which surged in popularity last year as a sport with built-in social distancing, returned to something approaching normal, with fans celebrating an extraordinary champion.

"It was like the Phil that I remember watching just

when I turned pro and it was great to see," Oosthuizen said.

The records Mickelson shattered were numerous. Julius Boros for 53 years held the distinction of golf's oldest major champion. He was 48 when he won the 1968 PGA Championship.

Mickelson became the first player in PGA Tour history to win tournaments 30 years apart. The first of his 45 titles was in 1991, when he was still a junior at Arizona State and Koepka was 8 months old.

Mickelson joined Woods — who sent a tweet of congratulations — among the 10 players who've won majors in three decades.

Lefty spent very little time talking to reporters before Sunday's post-tournament news conference and refused to discuss what a win would mean to him. Instead, he pounded extra balls on the driving range — even on Sunday, he was rehearsing swing positions in between shots — and spent time meditating to recapture the mental sharpness he said he'd lost earlier this year.

"Anybody who really thinks they can win on a Sunday is going to be feeling that pressure and the nerves," said 49-year-old Padraig Harrington, who closed with a 69 to tie for fourth. "I'd say Phil is full to capacity, but that's where he likes to live."

This was Mickelson's first major win with his brother, Tim, as his caddie. Could there be more?

"It's very possible that this is the last tournament I ever win. Like if I'm being realistic," Mickelson said. "But it's also very possible that I may have had a little bit of a breakthrough in some of my focus and maybe I go on a little bit of a run." □